

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 10-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. 2001/0021145 to Ichimura (hereinafter "Ichimura") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,441,359 to Cozier (hereinafter "Cozier").

Claims 4-9 and 17-19 are allowed.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have canceled withdrawn claims 1-3 and rejected claims 10-16 without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, allowed claims 4-9 and 17-19 remain currently pending and under consideration.

All Remaining Claims are in Condition for Allowance

Claims 10-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichimura in view of Cozier. Claims 1-3 are withdrawn from consideration. Applicants have canceled withdrawn claims 1-3 and rejected claims 10-16 without prejudice or disclaimer.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that all of the remaining claims 4-9 and 17-19 currently under consideration are allowed.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding issues have been resolved and/or rendered moot by the claim cancellations in the instant amendment document. Accordingly, the remaining claims 4-9 and 17-19 are in prima-facie condition for allowance in light of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in the latest Office Action.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Timely allowance of the pending claims is thus respectfully requested. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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